Atrocities on Indian Prisoners

†1698. DR. A.K. PATEL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item published in Dainik Bhaskar dated the 1st September, 2002 under the caption "Julmon Ne Pagalpan ki Had Tak Pahunchaya Bhartiya Qaidiyon Ko";

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the efforts Government are making for release of these prisoners?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes.

(b) and (c) Government are aware of ill treatment meted out to Indian prisoners detained in Pakistani jails. Prisoners are released in accordance with established procedure, involving consular identification and nationality verification, after their jail sentence is over. Government have consistently taken up the matter of their early release and repatriation with the Government of Pakistan.

Prime Minister's U.S. visit

1699. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister visited the United States in early September to join the Commemoration of the September 11, tragedy;

(b) whether he had a special meeting with President Bush;

(c) if so, the issues which surfaced in the bilateral discussion;

(d) whether President Bush sought India's support to his efforts to oust Saddam Hussain regime from Iraq and the Gulf area; and

(e) if so, the stand taken by the Prime Minister in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) During his visit to New York for the United Nations General Assembly from 9-17 September 2002, the Prime Minister attended the commemoration of the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.